

Former CIA Official Warns Of Overuse Of Covert Actions

By JIM PARKER

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Covert CIA actions are coming back into vogue under the Reagan administration after nearly disappearing under former President Carter, a high-ranking retired CIA officer told students at The Citadel Thursday.

But Richard S. Sampson warned that such actions are only a tool which can be used in foreign relations and can prove disastrous when used as "stop-gap" measures when all else has failed.

In a second speech at the Charleston County Library, Sampson told listeners the Reagan administration is "the most stridently 'Cubaphobic' administration" since the Kennedy years and said talks with Cuban leader Fidel Castro are "the only sensible path" to dealing with the Latin power.

Para-military action and threats against Castro, popular in the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations and returning under President Reagan, have not worked, said Sampson, a 29-year CIA officer now living at Hilton Head.

In the Citadel speech, Sampson said, congressional hearings in the 1970s on CIA activities resulted in the agency beginning to lose the trust of foreign intelligence services from which it receives information.

The Reagan administration has begun emphasizing training for covert actions again after the activities became a "dying art" during the Carter years.

Also, only two Congressional subcommittees are now briefed on the activities as compared to eight under legislation passed in 1974.

While condemning Castro's "ideological contamination" of the Caribbean and Latin American area, Sampson said serious negotiations are needed to devise ways to manage or control U.S.-Cuban conflicts.

The United States and Cuba have interests that make them "intimately connected," Sampson said, quoting Thomas Jefferson's 1803 comments concerning Spanish intervention in Cuba.